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UNCLAS PANAMA 002095

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DEPARTMENT FOR WHA/CEN

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: PANAMA SENDS OBSERVERS TO HAITIAN ELECTIONS

REF: STATE 157629

(SBU) Panama sent three Electoral Tribunal magistrates, magistrate president Eduardo Valdes Escoffrey, magistrate Dennis Allen Frias and magistrate Erasmo Pinilla Castillero, to observe October local elections in Haiti as part of the mission organized by International Committee of Elections Canada. GOP has coordinated its participation with Elections Canada. Valdes, Frias and Pinilla will also observe the November national elections and run-off elections as part of the Elections Canada mission. In addition, Electoral Tribunal District Director Juan Barranco was selected by Elections Canada to form part of a ten-member technical team that supports Haiti's Provisional Electoral Council. Barranco will remain in Port au Prince from September 3, 2005 to February 2006, when the elections process is expected to be completed. Embassy will report any updates to the Department.

EATON